

COMMITTEE TO NOTIFY THE PRESIDENT

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I offer a privileged resolution (H. Res. 325) providing for a committee to notify the President of the assembly of the Congress, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 325

Resolved, That a committee of two Members be appointed by the Speaker on the part of the House of Representatives to join with a committee on the part of the Senate to notify the President of the United States that a quorum of each House has assembled and Congress is ready to receive any communication that he may be pleased to make.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

APPOINTMENT AS MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE TO NOTIFY THE PRESIDENT, PURSUANT TO HOUSE RESOLUTION 325

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair appoints as members of the committee on the part of the House to join a committee on the part of the Senate to notify the President of the United States that a quorum of each House has been assembled, and that Congress is ready to receive any communication that he may be pleased to make, the gentleman from Texas [Mr. ARMEY] and the gentleman from Missouri [Mr. GEPHARDT].

NOTIFICATION TO THE SENATE

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I offer a privileged resolution (H. Res. 326) to inform the Senate that a quorum of the House has assembled, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution as follows:

H. RES. 326

Resolved, That the Clerk of the House inform the Senate that a quorum of the House is present and that the House is ready to proceed with business.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

DAILY HOUR OF MEETING

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I offer a privileged resolution (H. Res. 327) and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 327

Resolved, That until otherwise ordered, the hour of meeting of the House shall be 2 p.m. on Mondays; 11 a.m. on Tuesdays and Wednesdays; and 10 a.m. on all other days of the week up to and including May 11, 1996; and that from May 13, 1996, until the end of the second session, the hour of daily meeting of the House shall be noon on Mondays; 10 a.m. on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, and 9 a.m. on all other days of the week.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON TODAY

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on today.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

WASHINGTON, DC,
January 3, 1996.

Hon. NEWT GINGRICH,
The Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in clause 5 of rule III of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, I have the honor to transmit a sealed envelope received from the White House on Tuesday, January 2, 1996 at 12:05 p.m. and said to contain a message from the President whereby he submits an unclassified report on the Loan Guarantees to Israel Program.

With warm regards,

ROBIN H. CARLE,
Clerk, U.S. House of Representatives.

UNCLASSIFIED REPORT ON LOAN GUARANTEES TO ISRAEL PROGRAM—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, without objection, referred to the Committee on International Relations:

To the Congress of the United States:

Enclosed is an unclassified report on the Loan Guarantees to Israel Program and on economic conditions in Israel, as required by section 226(k) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended (Public Law 87-195), and section 1205 of the International Security and Development Cooperation Act of 1985 (Public Law 99-983).

WILLIAM J. CLINTON,
THE WHITE HOUSE, December 30, 1995.

□ 1230

PRIVILEGES OF THE HOUSE—RIGHTS OF THE HOUSE COLLECTIVELY

Mr. GEPHARDT. Mr. Speaker, I rise to a question of the privileges of the House, and I offer a resolution pursuant to rule IX.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 328

Whereas clause 1 of rule IX of the Rules of the House of Representatives states that "Questions of privilege shall be, first, those affecting the rights of the House collectively, its safety, dignity, and the integrity of its proceedings";

Whereas over 280,000 Federal employees have been barred from performing the jobs for which they will eventually be paid;

Whereas more than 480,000 Federal employees are required to report for work without being paid their full salaries at regular intervals;

Whereas the public is not receiving the benefits of their tax dollars; and

Whereas the inability of the House of Representatives to act on legislation keeping the Government in operation impairs the dignity and the integrity of the House and the esteem the public holds for the House; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that upon the adoption of this resolution the House shall be considered to have taken from the Speaker's table the bill H.R. 1643, with a Senate amendment thereto, and concurred in the Senate amendment, and that a motion to reconsider that action shall be considered as laid on the table.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Does the gentleman from Missouri [Mr. GEPHARDT] wish to be heard on whether or not his motion constitutes a question of privilege?

Mr. GEPHARDT. I do, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Missouri is recognized.

Mr. GEPHARDT. Mr. Speaker, let me explain why this is most certainly a question of privilege and why this Congress must finally reopen the Federal Government, with no threats or conditions, while we work to resolve the budget impasse that we are involved in.

The fact is that while we fight over the Federal budget, millions of Americans are being held hostage; and while some Republicans have even suggested that no one has noticed this Government shutdown, I think that is simply fiscal fantasy, not reality.

Think about the frail, home-bound seniors who will not have their meals delivered on time, or at all. Think about the elderly who will not have their Medicare claims processed, and the jobless who will not receive their unemployment checks.

Right now, crucial cleanups of toxic waste dumps have been stopped, and the Government's efforts to crack down on workplace abuses and nursing home atrocities are grinding to a halt. If you ask me, that is more than wrong; it is an abuse of power. It is an abuse of the responsibility the American people have placed in this Congress, and in each of us, when they elected us to serve them, not just to throw ideological tantrums. Even the Republicans in the other body have rejected the radicalism of this shutdown.

The extremist approach says, if the President will not agree to a budget that slashes Medicare to give huge tax breaks to the wealthy, we are going to make the whole country suffer until we get our way.

This is, by far, the longest and most devastating Government shutdown in American history. According to news